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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
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Summary record of the 1221st meeting
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 3 July 2014, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Ameline

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (*continued*)

Combined second and third periodic reports of Mauritania (CEDAW/C/MRT/2-3; CEDAW/C/MRT/Q/2-3 and Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Mauritania took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Ms. Mint Elghotob Ould Moma** (Mauritania), introducing the combined second and third periodic reports of Mauritania (CEDAW/C/MRT/2-3), said that, despite an international backdrop marked by economic instability, insecurity, massive movements of refugees organized crime and a scarcity of financial resources, her Government was making every possible effort to implement the legislative, judicial, economic, political and social measures necessary to meet its obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It had made great progress in consolidating democracy and the rule of law and the efficacy of the Independent National Electoral Commission, established to guarantee free and transparent presidential, legislative and municipal elections, had been confirmed by international observers in the 2014 elections. The report under consideration was the fruit of extensive consultation between State bodies, civil society and other stakeholders and detailed the steps taken to implement the recommendations made by the Committee during its previous review of the situation in the State party.

3. Conscious of women's role in the country's ongoing development, the Government of Mauritania had incorporated a gender perspective in many of its policies. Women's issues were at the heart of a raft of cross-cutting, multidimensional programmes and strategies, including the strategic framework for poverty reduction, the national health development plan, the national strategy for the development of the private sector, the national youth development strategy and the national strategy for the modernization of public services.

4. Women were well represented in decision-making positions, accounting for 7 of the country's 30 ministers, 31 of its 148 members of parliament, 9 out of 56 senators, 6 out of 218 mayors, 1,317 out of 3,722 municipal councillors and 2 out of 40 ambassadors. Three of the most senior positions within the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and the Family were occupied by women and the five candidates in the recent presidential elections had included one woman. Affirmative action measures were in place to facilitate women's access to other professions, including journalism and the judiciary, to increase the availability of scholarships for women, and to harmonize conditions of employment for women with those of men.

5. Women were also increasingly well represented in the media, occupying senior positions in public and private television. More generally, the liberalization of the broadcasting sector was enabling them to make their voices heard, bring the debate on family issues under the spotlight, and contribute to the construction of a more progressive society.

6. The legal framework for the protection of human rights had been enhanced by various pieces of legislation. Important new laws that benefited women included: the 2007 law against AIDS, which consolidated the non-discrimination provisions established in the Civil Status Act; the 2012 law which had amended the 1991 Constitution to enshrine the principle of equal access and equal opportunities and to align the National Human Rights Commission with the Paris Principles, among other provisions; the 2013 law which defined

slavery and torture as crimes against humanity; and the 2012 law on electoral lists which was designed to bring more women into elective office.

7. The fight against gender-based violence, which had been a taboo subject until 2004, had been elevated to the top of the Government agenda, through its accession to relevant international treaties and establishment of appropriate mechanisms. A national commission had been established to coordinate and oversee the preventive effort with support from regional and departmental committees and a network of specialized NGOs. A set of standard operating procedures for preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence, developed in conjunction with civil society, had been adopted in 2010; the National Statistics Office had conducted a baseline survey on violence against women to gauge the scale of the problem in 2012; a framework law to combat all forms of violence against women and girls, including female genital mutilation, was due to be adopted by the end of 2014; and a national action plan for 2014–2018 was under implementation. Two fatwas calling for an end to female genital mutilation had been promulgated and training in preventive strategies was being provided to religious leaders in areas where such practices were particularly prevalent.

8. Government efforts to give women greater autonomy included a drive to increase access to finance and a dedicated fund had been set up to provide microcredits for vulnerable families in rural areas. Efforts were also being made to improve access to education, health care and drinking water. As a result, the secondary school enrolment rate for girls had reached almost 30 per cent, health-care coverage had risen to 74 per cent within a five kilometre radius, the assisted birth rate was 77 per cent and, 58 per cent of the population had access to better quality water. Regional and local governance structures were being enhanced to further the process of decentralization that was fostering the integration, skills sharing, resource rationalization and budget and management efficiency necessary to continuing advances in all those areas.

9. The Government had taken the decision to withdraw the general reservation entered to the Convention and to replace it with specific reservations to article 13, subparagraph (a), and article 16.

Articles 1 to 3

10. **Ms. Nwankwo**, noting that the State party had assumed various commitments related to the Convention and other international treaties as a result of the universal periodic review process in 2011, asked what was being done to deliver on those commitments. In particular, she would like an update on progress towards fulfilling the recommendations to ratify the optional protocols to the Convention and other United Nations human rights treaties; to adopt a law prohibiting harmful practices, including female genital mutilation, polygamy, early marriage and forced feeding; and to draft and implement a national action plan to combat all forms of violence against women. She welcomed the withdrawal of the general reservation to the Convention but urged the State party to reconsider its decision to introduce specific reservations in its place.

11. Referring to paragraph 14 of the Committee's concluding comments on the initial report of Mauritania (CEDAW/C/MRT/CO/1), she asked whether a definition of discrimination against women that was in line with article 1 of the Convention had been incorporated in national legislation. Referring to the obligations that States parties assumed under article 2 of the Convention, and noting that the Code of Obligations and Contracts was apparently undergoing substantive review to align it with international standards, she sought assurance that the provisions stipulating that the testimony of two women was equal to that of one man and that women's status was equivalent to that of a minor would be removed. She would also like assurance that the legal provision which gave the courts' discretion to decide whether or not children had suffered harm as a result of genital

interference and made the perpetrators' sentence subject to that decision would also be eliminated.

12. **Ms. Zou** Xiaoqiao noted that the State party had failed to provide information on its efforts to fulfil the recommendations made in relation to the national machinery for the advancement of women in the Committee's previous concluding comments. She was concerned that the 2007 decision to establish the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and the Family to assume the role of the former Ministry for the Promotion of Women, the Child and the Family might have had an adverse affect on the State party's capacity to coordinate and implement policies for the empowerment of women and that the new ministry might lack the requisite authority, visibility and resources. She would like to know what percentage of the new ministry's budget was allocated to women's rights and gender equality; whether the ministry had a specific unit dedicated to women's issues; and, if so, how many staff worked in that unit. Noting also that, according to the State party's replies to the list of issues (CEDAW/C/MRT/Q/2-3/Add.1), women's empowerment was the responsibility of various ministries, she asked how many ministries were involved, how the responsibility was shared between them and how their respective activities were coordinated. In her view, a discrete ministry dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment would enhance the national machinery.

13. She would like to know more about the content of the national strategy for the advancement of women adopted in 2005 and the national gender mainstreaming strategy adopted in 2008, and whether the strategies had been, or would be, updated. If they had, she would like to know whether the new versions gave specific consideration to the situation of marginalized groups of women such as former slaves, the descendents of slaves, women of Arabic descent and women with disabilities; whether the effectiveness of the initial versions had been duly assessed; and, if so, what evaluation mechanisms had been used. Details of steps taken to mainstream gender issues in other national policies and strategies and to ensure the availability of gender-disaggregated data to support all areas and issues covered by the Convention would also be appreciated.

14. **Ms. Mint Boide** (Mauritania) said that violence against women, including female genital mutilation, was a global problem that was inextricably linked to religion. Since laws prohibiting such violent practices had been adopted in many nations but had failed to engender substantive change, the Government of Mauritania had opted to take a holistic approach that favoured voluntary abandonment and sought to engage civil society and religious leaders in the preventive effort. Specific measures adopted since 2007 had included implementation of the standard operating procedures and the national action plan to combat all forms of violence against women. The baseline survey on violence against women had revealed that almost 15 per cent of the female population had been exposed to sexual violence and around two thirds had suffered psychological violence.

15. The issuance of the fatwas calling for an end to female genital mutilation had been an especially prominent advance, with the potential to foster change at the supranational as well as national level. Awareness-raising campaigns were ongoing in the seven regions of Mauritania with the highest prevalence of female genital mutilation and had already contributed to a marked reduction. The Government's commitment to fighting violence against women had also been demonstrated in its support for a film documenting the nature and scale of gender-based violence in Mauritania which had been produced and broadcast by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 2008.

16. **Mr. Ould Ramdane** (Mauritania) said that protection against female genital mutilation was already provided through article 12 of the 2005 ordinance on the judicial protection of children but that the framework law due to be adopted by the end of 2014 would address all forms of physical, sexual and psychological violence in an integrated and comprehensive manner. The law would encompass prevention, protection, victim support,

jurisdictional matters and judicial procedures as well as penalties for perpetrators and strategies against recidivism. The draft under consideration was the fruit of a consultative process that had involved civil society and parliamentarians and incorporated all the principles covered by the Convention, including its definition of discrimination.

17. **Ms. Mint Boide** (Mauritania) said that the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and the Family coordinated all matters relating to women's rights. Its budget was currently five times larger than in 2007 and sufficient to fulfil its mandate. The Ministry consisted of several departments specializing in particular issues, such as the advancement of women and female genital mutilation, and was supported by mechanisms like the National Children's Council, and the National Committee against Gender-based Violence. Mechanisms had also been established to increase the visibility of gender issues at the highest level, such as sectoral offices, presided over by high-ranking officials, which ensured that all relevant information was reported to the Ministry. Databases had been created with information on gender issues, women's cooperatives and the role of women in politics and administration and employment, while a gender profile was due to be introduced to analyse and prioritize gender disparities across the country by sector and region.

18. **Ms. Mint Elghotob Ould Moma** (Mauritania) added that the department specifically dealing with women's issues had a number of sections responsible for promoting the role of women: the social services section focused on the social dimension and the concerns of the family and included six people directly responsible for women's rights. Other social issues, such as women with disabilities, women with specific needs and female-headed households, also came under the section's purview, thereby ensuring centralized attention to cross-cutting issues. The finance section promoted microcredit as a form of special assistance to female-headed households and women's cooperatives.

19. **Ms. Nwankwo** drew the delegation's attention to her earlier questions, which had not yet been answered, on the definition of discrimination, the ratification of the Optional Protocol and the review of the Code of Obligations and Contracts. She also asked whether the Government had plans to establish a specific ministry responsible for women's empowerment, because assigning women's empowerment to various departments was as ineffective as assigning it to none.

20. **Ms. Zou** Xiaoqiao asked what percentage of the budget of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and the Family was allocated to gender equality and women's rights; whether there was a department working specifically on those two areas; and, if so, how many staff members it contained.

21. **The Chairperson**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, asked whether there was good harmonization between Islamic, positive and common law, since it was difficult to create a body of laws which encompassed all three systems. Furthermore, given the level of cultural diversity in Mauritania, she asked what progress had been made in assisting minorities.

22. **Mr. Ould Ramdane** (Mauritania) said that a bill had been drafted laying down specific penalties for discrimination in all its forms, in complement to the many core laws which already existed in that area. The definition of discrimination had been elaborated in cooperation with international partners and Mauritania had sought to build on the broad definition in the Convention by making it specific enough to leave it to the discretion of judges to establish whether an action constituted discrimination. Under recent Criminal Code reforms, the power to impose penalties in such cases had been placed specifically in the hands of female judges. The country had a pyramid-based legal system: at the base were traditional methods of access to justice involving local advisers representing the justice system, who could produce no formal acts except a statement of the advice given. Judges

stood at a higher level, responsible for issuing judgements and executive decisions, and that power was also passed down to all magistrates. Even if women lacked financial resources, under the law no woman could appear before a judge unless represented by a lawyer. Legal assistance could be provided by a lawyer paid for through legal aid; pro bono lawyers; through a project to promote access to lawyers in remote areas of the country; or via an official fund for lawyers.

23. **Ms. Mint Elghotob Ould Moma** (Mauritania) said that a unit had been established to focus support on issues relating to the family and domestic violence. Should it prove impossible to settle a conflict amicably, the case was referred to women's tribunals which applied family law and the laws on domestic violence. Although she could not rule out the possibility of establishing a ministry responsible for women's empowerment, she questioned the benefits of such a body as the issues handled by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and the Family were often inextricably linked to women's rights. One of its five departments was specifically focused on women's issues and the main beneficiaries of the work of all five departments were women.

24. **Mr. Ould Abdel Malick** (Mauritania) said that Mauritania had acceded to the majority of international treaties related to women's rights and had removed its general reservation to all parts of the Convention which were contrary to the sharia. In Mauritania, personal status law and certain aspects of criminal law were derived from Islamic law; while other aspects of criminal law were derived from positive law via the French legal system. Under the country's monist system, the Convention took precedence over national law and was applied directly. The national legal system contained no provisions which were discriminatory against women, as all women were equal in the eyes of the law. The testimony of two women was indeed established to be equal to that of one man under national law.

25. **Mr. Ould Ely Telmoudy** (Mauritania) said that the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and the Family had a higher budget than the ministry which it had replaced. A breakdown of the exact amount spent on women was difficult, however, since it was not possible to establish what proportion of certain subsidies, such as those for persons with disabilities, were received by women. Nevertheless, given that all general establishments catered for women, including the centre for the advancement of women and the early childhood training centre, he estimated that women benefited from at least 60 per cent of the operating budget.

Articles 4 to 6

26. **Ms. Pomeranzi**, recalling the Committee's recommendation on temporary special measures in its concluding comments of 2007, said that it was encouraging that more women had been elected in recent elections, but that future temporary special measures should be focused on substantive equality for women. She suggested that the current critical mass of women in politics could breathe new life into investigations of the condition of women in Mauritania and contribute to large-scale cultural campaigns and political action that would transform the country's vision of the role of women.

27. **Ms. Hayashi**, following up on Ms. Nwankwo's question about the bill on violence against women, asked: whether it had been enacted, and if not, when that would happen; how it defined rape; and whether it included specific provisions encouraging victims to report acts of violence, on remedies for victims and on capacity building for law-enforcement officers and health and legal professionals. She questioned the effectiveness of the 2005 act criminalizing female genital mutilation given that penalties were applicable only if the mutilation had resulted in harm to the child. She also asked whether the 2014 updated act had been approved and whether it provided measures supporting practitioners of female genital mutilation. She requested information on measures to prevent the forced

feeding of girls and asked whether there were specific programmes to harness the media against forced feeding and female genital mutilation. She also would like to know whether the Government planned to conduct a national survey and create a database on victims of slavery so that special measures could be granted to female victims. Lastly, she requested statistics on the number of women who had benefited from pro bono legal aid and asked what measures had been implemented to help female victims of violence to access formal justice systems rather than traditional ones.

28. **Ms. Gabr** asked what progress had been made to comply with the recommendation made by the Committee in its concluding comments of 2007 that the State party should implement its 2003 legislation on the suppression of trafficking and on the prohibition of forced labour. NGOs had continued to report cases of slavery — few of which had been brought to court — and Mauritania still appeared to be a hub for trafficking and forced labour. She requested further details on the statement in the State party's replies that the Government intended to revise the legislation to prohibit all forms of trafficking: had studies on trafficking been carried out? Had national and cross-border coordination been improved? Had consideration been given to adopting the Ouagadougou Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, Especially Women and Children or relevant League of Arab States strategies? She recommended that the State party should: strengthen the application of the relevant legislation; improve regional cooperation; conduct studies on the matter; carry out a legislative survey; implement measures to reduce demand for forced labour; draw up a national action plan; and secure sufficient resources, if necessary through the International Organization for Migration or UN-Women.

29. **Ms. Leinarte** said that, instead of criminalizing prostitution, structural causes behind prostitution should be addressed, such as access to the labour market and to financial resources. After all, in Mauritania, some 78.8 per cent of women were working without pay and the average salary was 60 per cent lower than that of men. Under the Personal Status Code, women were currently under the exclusive leadership of men, and in society they were taught to submit to all men, which would include sex demanders and pimps. She advised the Government to decriminalize prostitution, which was not the same as legalizing it, and to seek other means of discouraging women from engaging in prostitution, such as psychological and social assistance and information campaigns for young girls. If decriminalization had never been considered before in Mauritania, what had prevented it?

30. **Ms. Mint Elghotob Ould Moma** (Mauritania) said that the authorities were trying to achieve the Millennium Development Goal target of 30 per cent women in decision-making bodies. Women were now eligible to run for election, vote and participate in decision-making and were thus obtaining high-level posts far more frequently. Although female genital mutilation had often been a taboo subject in the past, the Government was committed to raising awareness through audiovisual and printed media campaigns, publications and research. Islamic scholars were also helping attitudes to change.

31. **Mr. Ould Ramdane** (Mauritania) said that article 309 of the Criminal Code did not define rape, but did stipulate what sanctions would be applicable; moreover, sharia law was clear that rape meant sexual relations without consent. The bill on violence against women included a clear definition of rape and its different forms.

32. Article 12 of the 2005 ordinance on judicial protection of children stated that any interference, or attempted interference, with the genital organ of a girl child, including using an object as part of a harmful practice, was a punishable offence. The second part of article 12 provided for compensation to be granted to the victim, although damages were not mentioned because they were dealt with by the civil courts.

33. Sharia law punished attempts to undermine the dignity and integrity of a human being, and women in particular. Prostitution was considered to be a form of exploitation of women, who were seen as victims, and the law targeted pimps and other persons exploiting women through prostitution.

34. Trafficking in persons was just the tip of the iceberg in transnational organized crime, which was prevalent in Mauritania, as its geographical position made it a gateway to Europe. In collaboration with European partners, Mauritania had developed a national action plan to manage migration and combat human trafficking. It was based on three pillars: registering, protecting and including refugees and migrants in development plans. If migration was well managed, it was beneficial to both migrants and countries of origin, transit and destination. Legislation had been adopted in 2010 to combat illegal trafficking in migrants, focusing on targeting trafficking networks. Illegal migrants were not prosecuted in Mauritania because they were considered to be victims and might be able to provide useful information that would lead to the arrest of trafficking network organizers. Mauritanian agents were also infiltrating networks and the country was cooperating with organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and INTERPOL in their endeavours to combat trafficking.

35. **Ms. Mint Boide** (Mauritania) said that forced feeding was a traditional practice, which was on the wane because of the current fashion for women to be thin. A number of public awareness-raising campaigns had been conducted in conjunction with civil society organizations to try to combat both forced feeding and female genital mutilation.

36. **Mr. Ould Abdel Malick** (Mauritania) said that slavery was prohibited as a crime against humanity and was severely punished. Legislation adopted in 2007 set out a new definition of slavery and provided for victim compensation and assistance. Other measures adopted included setting up national agencies to combat slavery and poverty, implementing the road map developed in collaboration with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery and creating dedicated courts to try related offences.

37. New legislation had been adopted to clamp down on domestic work undertaken by girls and young women and prohibit hazardous work. In that connection, a number of public awareness-raising campaigns had been organized by civil society organizations.

38. **Ms. Mint Elghotob Ould Moma** (Mauritania) stressed that women in Mauritania had a more privileged status than women elsewhere in the region. They had access to the full range of services available, all professions were open to them, including the Armed Forces, and they enjoyed equal pay with men and were not subservient to men. She could see no reason why women would be forced into prostitution; it was a personal choice.

39. **Ms. Leinarte** said that women in prostitution were victims of sexual violence yet they were punished by the State. What punishments were meted out to the other parties to the crime — minders, pimps and clients — and how many had been prosecuted?

40. **Ms. Hayashi** asked when the bill on violence against women would be adopted and whether women could apply to the civil courts to seek compensation for damages and receive free legal aid for that purpose.

41. **Ms. Pomeranzi** emphasized that it was not merely the presence of women in the public sphere that would lead to greater equality, but the fact that women's issues were being raised by civil society and NGOs in public. In that way, they would become political issues discussed by the whole population, which would in turn lead to a change in attitudes. She asked what was being done at the political level, and what priority was accorded to developing policies that addressed women's issues and the advancement of women in Mauritania.

42. **The Chairperson**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, asked whether it was the National Human Rights Commission or the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and the Family that was in charge of monitoring domestic legislation to check for provisions that might be discriminatory against women.

43. **Mr. Ould Ramdane** (Mauritania) said that civil society and NGOs helped ensure women's access to the legal system and free legal aid.

44. Prostitution was an offence and punishable by 6 months' to 5 years' imprisonment. Pimps and other persons involved in exploiting women were charged under a different category of offence, which carried a sentence from 5 years' to life imprisonment. Given that prostitution was an illegal activity, it tended to be invisible. On the rare occasions that the authorities uncovered such activity, first offenders were arrested and given a warning. Repeat offenders were given a suspended sentence and it was generally at the third appearance before a judge that a custodial sentence was handed down. Foreign offenders were often deported. A growing trend was for vulnerable women migrants en route for Spain to fall into prostitution as a means of survival when their onward journey was thwarted.

45. Women victims of violence could only apply to the criminal courts if represented by a lawyer. The costs were covered under the legal aid system if they had insufficient resources. They could also apply for compensation, in which case the judge would allow time to apply to a civil court. Legal aid was provided to cover the cost of a lawyer for all stages of the process, including the appeal stage, if necessary.

46. **Ms. Mint Elghotob Ould Moma** (Mauritania) said it was hoped that the bill on violence against women would be adopted by the end of 2014. Much was being done at the political level to protect and promote women's rights by women representatives in parliament. The National Human Rights Commission was making every effort to support women and ensure they enjoyed their rights. Civil society and NGOs also played an important role in enhancing women's status.

Articles 7 to 9

47. **Ms. Bareiro-Bobadilla** welcomed the progress made by the State party in terms of women's political participation and encouraged it to go further and aim for the recommended 30 per cent, and ultimately parity, as political representation was an important step towards achieving full equality. Political will was not enough on its own and more vigorous measures should be adopted, such as the enactment of further legislation, financial incentives for political parties to introduce quotas and temporary special measures to ensure that more women were represented at the highest level in institutions, local government and the diplomatic service. She requested more information on the extent to which women were represented in the judiciary and public administration.

48. **Ms. Al-Jehani** enquired about discriminatory nationality laws that did not provide for a Mauritanian woman to pass on her nationality to her children, while nationality was granted automatically to a child born to a Mauritanian man. She was aware of the many discussions that had taken place on the subject of amending the relevant legislation and urged the State party to do so as soon as possible. She wondered whether any time frame for amending the legislation had been established.

49. She wished to know what happened in the case of a stateless or foreign father and whether the child of a Mauritanian woman living abroad could have Mauritanian nationality. A foreign woman married to a Mauritanian man could obtain Mauritanian nationality once she had lived continuously in Mauritania for 5 years, yet a foreign man married to a Mauritanian woman acquired that right only after living there for 10 years. Would the proposed amendments ensure that the same rules applied to both sexes? She

asked whether there were other obstacles to obtaining nationality and what measures had been adopted to counter them. Did foreign husbands and wives have to renounce their nationality of origin before becoming a naturalized Mauritanian citizen? She wondered whether a distinction was made in Mauritanian law between nationality of origin and nationality acquired by naturalization and whether all citizens enjoyed equal political rights.

50. **Ms. Mint Elghotob Ould Moma** (Mauritania) agreed that further action was needed to increase women's political representation. Nevertheless, progress had been made and current figures were encouraging, with 30 per cent female representation in parliament, 21 per cent in the National Assembly and 35 per cent in ministerial positions. More efforts were being focused on increasing the number of women in the diplomatic service and change was already happening in the judiciary: there were several female judges and many women lawyers.

51. **Mr. Ould Ramdane** (Mauritania) said that legislation on nationality had been adopted in the 1960s and had reflected the concerns at that time. That legislation had contained provisions prohibiting dual nationality but, since 2010, naturalized Mauritanians had been able to retain their nationalities of origin. All Mauritanian citizens enjoyed the same political rights, irrespective of whether they were born in the country or had acquired Mauritanian nationality through naturalization. Children of stateless or unknown fathers were automatically granted Mauritanian nationality but, on reaching the age of 18, they could choose their nationality. Furthermore, under recent Mauritanian reforms, biometric registrations had been carried out as part of a census, which had brought to light a certain number of Mauritanian children born out of wedlock whose parentage could not be established. A ministerial committee had been set up to determine procedures for registering their births and granting them nationality.

52. **Ms. Al-Jehani** said that her question on amending discriminatory legislation governing nationality remained unanswered. Had a draft bill been prepared and, if so, what was the time frame for its adoption? She wished to know whether a child's status or nationality might be changed under the aforementioned procedures to establish parentage. Her question on whether the amendments to the relevant legislation would ensure that the same rules applied to both sexes had not been answered either.

53. **Ms. Bareiro-Bobadilla** asked the delegation to provide the oral replies they had given in writing within two days, and to include precise data on the number of female ministers, mayors and judges compared with the total number of posts. The data would help the Committee to prepare its concluding observations and recommendations, as there appeared to be discrepancies between the information in the replies to the list of issues and the delegation's oral replies.

54. **The Chairperson**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, requested statistics on the number of refugee women applying for Mauritanian citizenship.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.